

15, 2006. Josh's legacy and contributions will live on in the hearts and minds of many for generations to come, and we are forever grateful for his service to our country.

Born and raised in Rowland, North Carolina, Josh embodied the true spirit of a dedicated and determined leader. He graduated from South Robeson High School in 1999 and joined the Army shortly after his graduation from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke in 2003. Described as a natural leader by his family, Josh served as a platoon leader in the infantry and had recently become an executive officer of his unit. He had been deployed to Iraq in August after serving in Afghanistan.

As someone who grew up in a military family, Josh always dreamed of serving in the Army as a paratrooper. In addition to his uncle, Dexter Clark, his older sister Ronnean Collins, and his two grandfathers, served in the military.

Josh loved his family and is survived by his parents, Ronnie and Regina Deese; his sisters, Ronnean Collins and Myra Deese; his 2-year-old son Jacob and his girlfriend Andrea Anderson.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, "If we make ourselves worthy of America's ideals, if we do not forget that our nation was founded on the premise that all men are creatures of God's making, the world will come to know that it is free men who carry forward the true promise of human progress and dignity." Indeed, Josh's life was the embodiment of this. He was a man who was known by persons of all races, ages, and religions for both his kind deeds and his loving, unselfish heart.

Mr. Speaker, dedicated service to others combined with dynamic leadership has been the embodiment of Josh's life. May we all use his wisdom, selflessness, and integrity as a beacon of direction and a source of true enlightenment. Indeed, may God bless to all of our memories the tremendous life and legacy of First Lieutenant Joshua Deese.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT
GENERAL LARRY J. DODGEN

HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to LTG Larry J. Dodgen, Commanding General of the United States Army Space and Missile Defense Command/United States Army Forces Strategic Command. General Dodgen is also the Commander of the Joint Functional Component Command—Integrated Missile Defense.

General Dodgen, a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, began his military career after graduating from Louisiana State University in 1972. Over the last 34 years, he has received numerous decorations and awards for his distinguished duty, including the Defense Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Legion of Merit with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with Four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to work with General Dodgen during his 2-year tenure as the Commanding General of the U.S. Army

Aviation and Missile Command, which is located at Redstone Arsenal in North Alabama. He served in that capacity from September 2001 through December 2003. During his tenure in North Alabama, General Dodgen worked to ensure that the entire North Alabama defense community was engaged in efforts to meet the future needs of the Army and the warfighter. Our work together continued after General Dodgen assumed the Command at SMDC. I applaud his commitment to the Army, Redstone, and to our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, after 34 years of honorable service in the U.S. Army, Lieutenant General Dodgen is retiring from active duty. On November 30, 2006, the North Alabama community held a celebration in his honor. I rise today to join them in their tribute and to thank him for his many years of service. I wish General Dodgen the very best for the future.

H.R. 5441, FY2007 HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5441, the Homeland Security Appropriations Conference Report.

As a member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee, it has been an honor to work with Chairman HAL ROGERS and with our Ranking Member MARTIN SABO who is retiring from Congress at the end of this session.

Congressman SABO has served our country with honor and distinction throughout his distinguished career in the House of Representatives.

I have had the privilege to serve with him on the Budget Committee and for the past 4 years on the Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee.

As the ranking member on the Budget Committee, MARTIN fought hard for fiscally responsible budgets and funding priorities that would enhance the quality of life of all Americans.

As the ranking member on the Homeland Security Subcommittee, he has been a true champion and advocate for real and effective security for our Nation.

He has led the fight, for example, to protect our ports, our aviation system, and our chemical plants.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman MARTIN SABO is a gentleman Congressman and a respected Member of the House. He has been the voice of calm and reason in a process that has had the potential to be partisan and acrimonious.

It has been a genuine privilege to serve with him in the U.S. House of Representatives and particularly on the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee.

I will miss him, and this House will miss him. MARTIN, I wish you the best in the future.

Mr. Speaker, the conference report before us makes several improvements to the House-passed bill and is a testament to Congressman SABO's leadership. The increased funding for Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant funds is essential to cities like Los Angeles that continue to be potential terrorist targets. UASI grants are badly needed by our local law enforcement officers who are the first line of

defense in a disaster or terrorist attack. These funds are critical to local efforts to prevent, prepare, respond and recover from acts of terrorism or mass disaster. I am happy that the UASI grants are funded in the conference at the House level of \$770 million, \$13 million or 2 percent above 2006.

I am pleased that this conference report has increased funding for fire grants to \$662 million; this is above the House-passed level and \$14 million (2 percent) above 2006. Included in the grant money is \$115 million for hiring additional personnel under the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Firefighters Act (SAFER Act). These funds are critical to firefighters such as those in my state of California. The funds will help fire services obtain additional personnel, equipment and training to better protect the American public.

The conference report also increases port security grants to \$210 million. This is \$173.25 million above last year's level. While this is an improvement over previous years' funding, it still is insufficient to meet the needs identified by the Coast Guard to adequately secure our ports. With only 6 percent of containers entering our seaports and fewer than half of our ports having radiation portal monitors, much work remains to be done.

I am pleased also that the conference report includes my report language on unaccompanied alien children, detention standards, alternatives to detention, increasing Customs and Border Protection operations at Ontario International Airport, and bill language that prevents the Department of Homeland Security from moving forward with its potentially dangerous plan to privatize key immigration officer positions at the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services. I am thankful that this inherently governmental work will continue to remain the responsibility of trained and experienced Federal employees directly accountable to the Department and not to the bottom line of a private company. I am also pleased that Senate language limiting the tenure of the university centers of excellence was not included in the conference report.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I also have a few concerns about this conference report. First, I am disappointed and greatly concerned that this bill's report expresses support for the expansion of the 287(g) program which allows State and local law enforcement officers to perform immigration enforcement functions. Many local law enforcement officers have stated that if they are required to enforce Federal immigration policies it would hamper their ability to successfully fight crime in their respective communities.

Secondly, I am concerned about certain provisos regarding chemical plant security. Preventing the Secretary of Homeland Security to disapprove a security plan based on the presence or absence of a particular security measure, undermines the Secretary's authority to require meaningful and comprehensive security measures.

Furthermore, shielding from public discourse information submitted on security plans, treating the information during court proceedings as if it were classified material, and making scrutiny of the implementation and enforcement of the security requirements the sole purview of the Secretary, prohibits the needed transparency and oversight of a system intended to provide security for all Americans. Finally, I am concerned that allowing the Secretary to approve alternative security programs